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CONTACT:

Karen Larimore Wilkinson

City of Salisbury

Public Information and Communications

City Hall, 217 South Main Street

Salisbury, North Carolina 28144

Work Phone: 704-638-2113

Cell: 704-213-1050

Information: <http://www.salisburync.gov>

Work Email Contact: [kwilk@salisburync.gov](mailto:kwilk@salisburync.gov)

## **City of Salisbury Annual Arbor Day Celebration and Tree Planting Activities Slated for Friday, April 23**

*Salisbury to Receive National Tree City USA Designation for Twenty-Fourth Consecutive Year*

Salisbury, NC\_April 15, 2010 - The City of Salisbury and the Salisbury Tree Board will host a tree planting ceremony on Friday, April 23, in conjunction with their annual Arbor Day Celebration. The event scheduled to begin at 12 noon, will take place at 225 West Miller Street and commence with the reading of the Arbor Day Proclamation. Urban Forestry Specialist Eric Muecke, N.C. Division of Forest Resources, will be in attendance and present the Tree City USA designation to Salisbury for the twenty-fourth consecutive year. Following the brief service, local residents, community volunteers, and Salisbury Tree Board members will join together to plant ornamental trees along West Miller Street. Tree plantings will occur between the areas of City Park and North Main. The public is cordially invited to attend and participate in tree-planting activities.

Mayor Susan Kluttz, speaking on behalf of the Salisbury City Council shares, "Salisbury's urban forest provides numerous environmental benefits. Trees improve our air quality by absorbing harmful gasses and pollutants and by returning oxygen into the air that we breathe. Storm water runoff and flooding can be significantly reduced when trees are present. In addition, trees lower urban temperatures and provide a canopy of protection for citizens from the rain, sun, and heat." Kluttz offers that the planting of trees provides for an aesthetically pleasing environment. "Trees create a sense of community and encourage walking, neighborhood interaction, and promote a feeling of ownership and care. Salisbury's urban forest projects a warm and welcoming impression to visitors; it is truly an extension of our city's community pride and spirit."

Senior Planner Janet Gapen notes that the West Miller Street area was selected to allow tree plantings to complement sidewalks installed during 2009. The sidewalk project was funded through a Fit Community grant of the North Carolina Health & Wellness Trust Fund. Gapen, who also serves a liaison to the Salisbury Historic Preservation Commission shares, "Together, the new sidewalk and street trees will assist in fulfilling a goal of the North Main Neighborhood Association (NOMA). NOMA was instrumental in the city's receipt of grant funding to construct the Miller Street sidewalks. In the near future, an additional phase of the Fit Community sidewalk project will offer the installation of sidewalks along Lake Drive, completing a 1.5 mile connector between NOMA and the Salisbury Greenway." Gapen explains that NOMA serves as a volunteer organization that meets monthly and works to complete neighborhood improvement projects. The North Main Neighborhood is bounded by Lafayette Street and 17th Street and located between Jackson Street and the Southern Railway tracks to the east. Gapen shares, "NOMA is dedicated to building a stronger, safer, and more vital Salisbury community for all."

For more information regarding NOMA, upcoming meetings, and improvement projects, please visit <http://www.north-main.org/>.

City of Salisbury Landscape Division Manager Mark Martin explains that the Tree City USA program provides direction, assistance, and recognition for urban and community forestry programs throughout the nation. "To qualify as a Tree City USA community, a municipality must meet four standards established by The Arbor Day Foundation and the National Association of Foresters. These parameters include the creation of a Tree Board, adoption of a Tree Care Ordinance, the provision of a Community Forestry Program, and an annual Arbor Day observance and proclamation. These standards ensure that all qualifying communities offer a tree management plan and program." Martin serves as staff liaison to the Salisbury Tree Board and recognizes the dedicated work of the board's volunteers and the city's commitment to open space through continuous development of a community forest. "We sincerely thank our dedicated Salisbury Tree Board members for their many contributions of time and talent and uplift the vision and leadership of our Salisbury City Council. Trees touch the lives of people within a community. Citizens benefit from cleaner air while experiencing a sense of pride in an aesthetically-pleasing urban forest environment. The City of Salisbury is extremely proud to accept the national Tree City USA designation for the twenty-fourth consecutive year."

For more information regarding upcoming Arbor Day festivities or details regarding the Salisbury Tree Board, please contact Landscape Manager Mark Martin at 704-638-5255. The City of Salisbury is an equal opportunity employer with over 180 different job classifications and more than 400 full-time positions. For more information regarding the City of Salisbury and its services and departments, please visit us on the web at [www.salisburync.gov](http://www.salisburync.gov). To receive updates regarding local initiatives, meetings, programs, and events, please join the City of Salisbury's Facebook users group at [www.salisburync.gov/facebook](http://www.salisburync.gov/facebook) or follow us on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/CitySalisburyNC>.

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